

Councillors Present:

Arbury: Alan Levy, Tim Ward (Chair)
King's Hedges: Louise Downham, Michael Pitt, Neale Upstone
East Chesterton: Jenny Bailey, Clare Blair, Marian Holness
West Chesterton: Diane Armstrong, Max Boyce, Ian Nimmo-Smith

County Councillors: Rupert Moss-Eccardt, (Arbury)

07/22 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

**Action
by**

Councillor Armstrong was elected Chair and Councillor James Vice Chair.

Cllr Armstrong in the Chair.

07/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors Huppert and Wilkins.

07/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Moss-Eccardt declared a personal interest in minute number 07/27 **Update on Open Space & Recreation Strategy Projects** as Chair of the Friends of Histon Road Cemetery who were given a grant by the City Council through Active Communities.

07/25 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2007 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

07/26 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

06/126 – ASB Group Cllr Downham reported that no response had yet been received from Cllr Huppert. [copy from 1/2/07 minutes "Councillor Downham referred to the recommendations from the ASB Group relating to the installation of a flashing 30mph sign at both ends of Kings Hedges Road. County Councillor Huppert had agreed to follow up the Group's recommendations; Cllr Downham said she would ask Cllr Huppert if any progress had been made on this or the related issues."] Cllr Moss-Eccardt said that the County Council were reviewing the policy

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which currently only allowed flashing signs in villages and not in urban areas. Cllr Pitt said that he was continuing to pursue this policy with the County Council to see if it could be changed. Cllr Downham asked that Cllr Huppert be pressed for a reply.

Cllr
H'pert

07/05 – Parking of trade vehicles Cttee noted an outstanding action for Councillor James [copy from 1/2/07 minutes] “he would take up the issue of parking restrictions as he had concerns over emergency vehicle accessing the Molewood/Hazelwood estate.” Noted that there was no update due to Cllr James’ absence.

Cllr
James

07/15 - Transit Site for Travellers Cllr Nimmo-Smith reported that a Working Party was being set up and that members of it were soon to be nominated. Any reports to the Working Party would be brought to North Area Committee

Cllr
Nimmo-
Smith

07/15 – Condition of Paths Noted that this item was on the current agenda and that officers were present to answer questions.

07/27 OPEN FORUM

Milton Country Park: A member of the public asked what help the City Council was prepared to give to help those trying to save Milton Country Park for posterity.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith explained that the City Council could not provide any funding but that ways in which City Council officers might provide expertise and work in partnership with South Cambs to keep the Park running were actively being pursued.

Committee decision to grant planning permission to approve mosque and cultural centre: A member of the public said he had spoken to the chair of the mosque and to committee members and that one representative on the mosque committee knew the city’s MP, David Howarth, and Cllr Huppert and had been to Lib Dem meetings. He said that Cllr Nimmo-Smith had failed to declare an interest on this planning application and that due and proper process had not been followed and that the application had been approved against the officer recommendation for refusal. He asked that the Labour Party investigate the matter.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith responded by saying that these allegations were out of order in this meeting and that such contacts as there had been between him and the applicants prior to the determination of this planning application were certainly not party political in nature. If the speaker had such concerns about due and proper process in relation to a planning application, then he had 4 avenues through which he could

make his complaint:

1. Lodge a formal complaint with the City Council
2. Complain to the Standards Board of England
3. Write to the Local Government Ombudsman saying there had been maladministration
4. Request a judicial review.

Councillor Ward commented that if there was any evidence of corruption it should be taken directly to the police.

Wheelie bins on the pavement on Victoria Road A member of the public said that residents had received a letter from the City Rangers on 29 January informing them that bins were going to be removed from the pavements but they were still there.

Cllr
Ward

Cllr Ward agreed to take the matter up on behalf of the resident.

Park & Ride stop at the Golden Hind A member of the public referred to the fact that the Park & Ride bus no longer stopped at the Golden Hind and that the only other bus, the Citi 2, provided a very slow service to Addenbrooke's.

Cllr Blair agreed about the Park & Ride stop and said that a petition with 140 signatures had been presented to the County Council.

Another resident said that Stagecoach had taken the view that the Park & Ride had been slowed on its journey into the City centre by too many stops. She also thought that efforts ought to be made to get the Citi 2 back to its published schedule and that thought be given to published journey times as they seemed unrealistic.

A third resident who had a concessionary bus pass and who used the Citi 2 a great deal gave vivid examples of the problems – waiting 40 minutes for a bus to come in very cold weather, that it was full when it arrived; that 3-4 went by on the other side of the road in quick succession; that inspectors when approached were rude. She had approached Age Concern who had written a letter on her behalf. The reply from Stagecoach was that delays were due to the road works on Milton Road. She asked that pressure be put on Stagecoach by the City Council.

Cllr Bailey explained that, as a private company, Stagecoach could do what they wanted. The City Council could work with the County Council to try to influence Stagecoach timetables and routes.

The committee noted other comments from residents and councillors – that a letter to the County Council portfolio holder had received no reply; that double decker buses on some routes had helped overcrowding; that the Citi 2 had encountered road works in St Andrews Street as well as Milton Road and that badly parked vehicles on Mill Road also delayed it.

Cllr Ward agreed to raise these issues at the next meeting of the Community and Public Transport Steering Group.

Cllr
Ward

At the suggestion of a resident, the committee agreed to ask Stagecoach to come to the next meeting of the committee to answer questions on performance.

Cttee
Mgr

Funds for Concessionary Fares A resident referred to an article in the Cambridge Evening News about the County Council having no funds to implement the next year of concessionary fares.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith said that funding provided by the County Council this year was being substantially refunded from additional reward grant earned by the District Councils. However, it was true that the government had not provided information on how the scheme would be financed from April 2008 and that was a concern.

Update on Open Space & Recreation Strategy Projects Ian Ross, Recreation Service Manager, and Justin Marsh, Recreation Officer for Growth Projects, explained how residents and councillors could actively contribute by suggesting new projects. They handed out a leaflet which explained the process over the period of each year and how to become involved. They explained that there were 12-16 approved projects for the North Area (including the King's Hedges Learner Pool and the St Albans Road Recreation Ground). Public consultation on the scheme for Ramsden Square was due to begin in two weeks time.

Cllr Hughes asked that the public toilets at Jedburgh Close and the King's Hedges Learner Pool be re-opened and suggested that golfing facilities for young people be explored.

Cllr Downham welcomed the work of Active Communities and asked how suggestions from the leaflets would be followed up and how the committee would be kept informed.

Ian Ross said that if there were lots of projects suggested then there would be a report to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee after which they would be subject to public consultation.

07/28 TREES IN THE NORTH AREA OF THE CITY

Diana Oviatt-Ham, Principal Arboricultural Officer, gave a short presentation. She highlighted the following:

- The team's Administrative Officer, Chris Tweed (01223 457132), was the person for members of the public to contact in the first instance.
- The team had responsibility for all trees in the city in the public sector (on land/property owned by the City Council and the County Council eg the highways) and in the private sector.

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- Work on trees on the public highway accounted for 80% of her budget.
- All trees were inspected on a 3-year cycle.
- If there were health and safety issues with a tree (eg in parks, open spaces, play areas) then the team inspected on an as needed basis.
- Her role included commenting and advising the Planning Officers with regard to trees included in planning applications.
- She was responsible for issuing Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).
- There was a City wide Arboricultural Strategy which was coming up for review later in 2007.
- The Council has a list of approved contractors for carrying out any tree works.
- Resolutions to trees causing problems were often complex and compromise was often needed.

Residents asked the following to which Diana Oviatt-Ham replied (A):

1. There were problems caused by trees dropping buds, petals, leaves etc on the public footpath especially when it rained which even regular street cleaning could not adequately deal with.

A: There were really no trees that did not shed something during a year.

2. Trees often obscured street lights.

A: Removing foliage from around street lights was carried out and she agreed to put the relevant contact number on the webpage where residents were encouraged to report problems with lights.

3. Tree roots came through footpaths and made them dangerous.

A: Acknowledged the problem with tree roots and pavements and said that root cutting was undertaken and the footpath repaired but on some occasions root cutting would destroy the tree and a balance had to be found.

4. Was there a policy to replant when trees were removed? If so, this did not seem to have happened on Milton Road.

A: There was a policy of replanting usually in streets that did not have many trees. With regard to Milton Road, the trees were owned by the County Council and a decision was awaited about the introduction of bus lanes etc before a plan presented 8 years ago about re-planting could be considered. Cllr Upstone added that he was chasing the County Council about re-planting and putting the view that more traffic measures were required not more north bound bus lanes.

5. Was global warming affecting trees?

A: Beech trees and to a lesser extent birch trees were stressed by dry summers. The prevalence of mistletoe in recent years was also an

Diana
Oviatt-
Ham

indicator of climate change.

Councillors raised the following with answers (A):

Cllr Hughes: Concern re dead trees near the Pulley??? Also unplanned sycamore trees in the front gardens of council houses eg as on Minerva Way where the largest had a 4-inch girth. Roots coming through the footpath (eg Ashcroft Close) needed a sign to alert those with a disability to the hazard. At Strathcarron, hedges were now trees because occupants did not cut the hedges. What was the City Council's policy regarding housing land? She also noticed that bark damage was being done to trees by children with knives. She asked that liaison work be done with schools to educate children about the importance of trees.

A: Tenants were responsible for the upkeep of their gardens. Work was being done in schools and the use of knives on tree bark could be addressed.

Cllr Holness: Could reassurance be given that we were planting more trees than were lost overall.

A: Definitely plant more than are removed. More than 3,000 have been planted in the last 10 years.

Cllr Ward: When the city was looked at from the air or from surrounding higher land, it looked like a city of trees. Were there plans to plant trees in the new urban extensions to provide that canopy? In order to have large trees, more space would be required for each tree. He was pressing the County Council to put this in their guidelines.

07/29 PAVEMENT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE IN THE NORTH AREA OF THE CITY

The Chair welcomed two officers from the County Council, Louise Collier, Head of Network Management (North, West and East) and Jon Clarke, Deputy Highways Maintenance Manager and, from the City Council, Andrew Latchem, Area Housing Manager, City Homes North. She invited them to explain how the repair and maintenance of footpaths and highways was carried out.

Louise Collier explained that roads were inspected every year and that pavements that were deemed dangerous were scheduled for repair. The County officers worked closely with City officers on this.

Andrew Latchem explained that footpaths within council housing estates were managed by the City Council's Housing Department. When a trip hazard was reported, the Council's standard was that a repair was

carried out within 5 days.

Councillors and residents then asked the following to which the officers responded:

- Cllr Hughes said that it had taken 3 years to get improvements in Nuns Way so the process was not as simple as described. However, a fault reported the previous day in Abbots Close had been repaired by the morning of the next day.
- Cllr Pitt asked what the criteria were for deciding between something that was ugly and something that was dangerous.

Andrew Latchem explained that the standard for dangerous trip hazard was a gap of 20mm or the depth of a £1 coin between one paving slab and another.

- Cllr Nimmo-Smith said that the severe problems in George Street seemed intractable without a large budget. People walked in the road to avoid the uneven pavement and that was also a health and safety hazard. Might it be possible to remake the road?

Jon Clarke explained that the street was an old road in part of historic Cambridge which had not only residents' parking but also a cycle lane against the flow of traffic. The streets of the city were assessed but then they were compared with the problems over the county as a whole.

- Cllr Moss-Eccardt mentioned the problems when only part of the pavement was repaired as had happened when cables had been laid. The different areas then weathered at different rates.

Louise Collier explained repairing the highways was done in order of priority and as sites deteriorated they did progress up the priority list. For footways, there was a general scheme for an area.

- A resident said that the dropped kerbs were poor and requested that a walkabout in King's Hedges ward involving residents, ward councillors and officers be carried out.

Cllr Downham said that in her opinion the dropped kerbs required specialist input. She informed the meeting that 6 monthly meetings between councillors and city and county council officers had been set up to consider the pavements in the North and South Areas of the city.

- Cllr Hughes asked how much had been budgeted for wall damage as a result of some recent re-planting and what had been done to dismantle the planter areas in Minerva Way that were no longer functional.

Andrew Latchem said that there was no specific budget but that a grant was available from the Community Services budget for Environmental Improvements.

07/30 NORTH AREA NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

The Committee received an update from Inspector Jon Hutchinson on the policing priorities agreed at the last meeting. 1) Burglary in King's Hedges and Arbury - had been at unacceptable levels due to the activities of ten 17-21 year olds. Eight were now in prison with one receiving a sentence of 3 ½ years. The rate had now improved. 2) Anti-Social Behaviour in Molewood Close/Hazelwood Close – there had been 15 incidents by a small number of young people which was a huge improvement on the previous 4 weeks. The young people had been offered acceptable behaviour contracts and the ringleader had been given an ASB order. 3) ASB in East Chesterton – The CCTV van was being used. There were some tenancy issues to be addressed.

The Crime Update showed that recorded crime had increased but 300 incidents had been committed by one individual who was now in jail on an 8 month sentence. Burglary in the North was still higher than elsewhere in the city. There were 22 incidents of vehicle crime in Minerva Way which were carried out by one individual. ASB was comparatively low for the period.

For the 4 wards, the update is in the report presented to the committee.

Cllr Hughes alerted the police to the fact that some young people were feeling harassed by the police and that some older people were showing ASB in the way they handled young people they thought were showing ASB.

Cllr Ward asked that the second recommendation include French's Road which was supported by a resident of that street who spoke of problems.

She said that she had been asked to come to represent residents of the street. One problem area is the access down to the backs of the properties where people keep their cycles which have been stolen. One disabled resident had been threatened by young people with knives. He dialled 999 but the police did not come until the next day. Residents were afraid to give statements to the police in case they were targeted by the offenders.

Inspector Hutchinson said that use of knives was completely unacceptable and he was happy to add French's Road to this recommendation and to tackle this behaviour.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith asked whether there were particular police measures in place for Strawberry Fair and Midsummer Fair as there had been a number of incidents last year.

Inspector Hutchinson acknowledged the problems at Midsummer Fair and said that mobile CCTV cameras were to be deployed, that staff duties had been changed with regard to the towpath and that any incidents would be dealt with immediately. For Strawberry Fair extra police were being drafted in. He asked for support from residents to let the police know of any incidents especially urinating against house walls. A resident suggested that dispersal orders in the centre of the city had displaced street drinkers to the North Area. He asked what scrutiny was done of Cllr Nimmo-Smith's decisions about dispersal orders.

Cllr Nimmo-Smith said that a report would be going to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on 3 September which would give an overview of the use and effectiveness of dispersal order areas.

Cllrs Hughes and Ward urged residents to report incidents related to street drinking as the police needed evidence in order to act.

The Committee unanimously agreed the amended recommendations as follows:

- Molewood Close and Hazlewood Close to be removed as priorities.
- Streetlife related ASB in the area around the Histon Road Cemetery (including French's Road) and Mitchams corner to be considered as a priority.
- Consideration should be given to burglary in Arbury and Kings Hedges remaining as a priority.
- Crime and ASB in East Chesterton should remain as a priority, with officers targeting prolific individuals as opposed to patrolling the area.
- Consideration should be given to youth related ASB in the area between Histon Road and Stretton Avenue in the Arbury ward.

07/31 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee agreed to go ahead with the following schemes:

- Chestnut Grove verge protection scheme – to proceed with the consultation and if that is favourable to proceed with the works (note that an email to members from the Landscape Architect indicated that the cost would be £17,600 and not £21,000 as given

in the officer report).

- Chesterton Hall Crescent planting area and brick wall – local residents to be informed about the work before proceeding with it.
- Harvey Goodwin Avenue traffic calming – to proceed with the consultation including Harvey Goodwin Gardens.
- Mitchams Corner dog memorial refurbishment - As there had been a change of bank manager at the Lloyds TSB, it was agreed that Cllr Nimmo-Smith would contact him to request a contribution towards the scheme. Consultation on the scheme to be progressed regardless of the response from Lloyds TSB.
- St Kilda Avenue – in reply to questions from Cllr Downham, the Principal Landscape Architect said that the engineer was confident that actions could be taken to lessen the gradient on the path and that the footpath would have a dip in it which would allow safe passage for the disabled.

Nicholson Way/ Walker Court seating

After Cllr Downham said that the scheme was not what residents wanted and that what was proposed could lead to ASB according to the police, it was agreed that the scheme would be agreed in consultation with Cllr Downham, the other Ward Councillors and the Chair.

07/32 FEEDBACK ON WINTERCOMFORT EMERGENCY SHELTER

Cllr Boyce who had asked for the report said that he was happy with it and asked that local residents be told about it.

Cttee
Mgr

07/33 DATE OF APRIL 2008 MEETING

The Committee agreed by 9 votes to 2 to meet on 17 April.

07/34 APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

13.1

Site	North Arbury Post Office 12A Cameron Road
Proposal	Erection of 1No. 3 bed Lifetime home and 1 No. 2 bed Lifetime home (following demolition of the existing building)
Recommendation	Approve with conditions
Application No	07/0144FUL
Applicant	Cambridge Flagship Housing Society, Endurance House, Chivers Way, Histon CB4 9XR
Public Speakers	Mr O'Connor (for the applicant)

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Decision	Approved (unanimously) subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report
13.2	
Site	12 Long Reach Road
Proposal	Erection of single storey extension to front and 2 storey extension to side of house, and conversion to 2 No. flats.
Recommendation	Approve subject to conditions
Application No	07/0237/FUL
Applicant	Mr D Summerfield, 58 Herbert Street Cambridge CB4 1AQ
Public Speakers	Mr D Summerfield
Decision	Approved (unanimously) subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the report

The meeting finished at 10.25pm

Chair